

addition become to any profitable degree proficient in translating Homer. Now this principle of learning the later forms first is quite rational as applied to English or any other language that is learned for practical use in the exchange of thought. But the analogy existing in that respect between English, French, etc., should not be extended to Latin and Greek. Any sane man will agree to the importance of being familiar, and practically familiar, with modern English or modern French if one is acquainted with these languages at all. But what preponderating reason there is, at this distance of over twenty centuries from either Homer or Xenophon, for being practically familiar with the dialect used by either of them, it is difficult to see. Little will it avail any one at present to express himself in the rounded periods of Demosthenes. If Greek conversation is what is aimed at, why trouble with the conversational medium used by men who died over two thousand years ago, and who today would find difficulty in making themselves understood before an Athenian audience? Carry out the principle consistently and let us have modern Greek as a study in our schools, and not even Xenophon. No, we do not study Demosthenes and Xenophon for the purpose of speaking or writing exactly like them, but for the intellectual exercise, for the insight into linguistic mechanism, for the polish and refinement in thought, in logical expression, and in the acoustic properties of language, to be derived from the critical study of any language such as Greek used by any man such as Demosthenes. It is not for the actual *use* of the language, but for the intellectual and *æsthetic effects* of acquaintance with the literature of the language that we study Greek. That being the case, the argument that boys must be taught to write good Attic prose before they

are treated to even the least enjoyment of good Ionic poetry seems rather unreasonable. How many university graduates can write good Attic prose? And of what use is it going to be to them in after life if they can? I mean of what use will be the actual facility in writing, not the effects of the effort necessary to acquire that facility. And what would be thought of the best Attic prose writer in the world had he no taste for the beauties of Grecian poetry? His education would be one-sided, and of the two many would prefer the man who might be one-sided on the other side. Well, then, if men who go through college are frequently unable, and reasonably so, to compose good Attic prose, where are we to fix the point for admitting students to the *æsthetic* benefits of what is suitable as a first study in Greek poetry? In my opinion, as soon as they have intelligently translated one book of Xenophon's good Greek prose. The youngest child in our primary schools is not thought too young to know something of English verse. In fact a good many of them, and happy I say they are, have been treated to the sounds and crude imagery of nursery rhyme; aye, and have been taught to lisp it too, long ere they could do more than lisp in anything like respectable English prose. If, then, this *æsthetic* culture is not thought unworthy of the time bestowed upon it in the case of young children, with whom the desirability of learning the practical use of their mother-tongue is paramount, what argument is necessary for an early introduction to poetry in the case of the student of Greek, with whom the practical acquirement of the language is by no means paramount, but quite insignificant as compared with the indirect benefits of intellectual and *æsthetic* culture?

By all means let the highest type